



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

1

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/789,159	02/27/2004	Takahiro Ochiya	082368-000200US	8186
20350	7590	01/11/2007	EXAMINER	
TOWNSEND AND TOWNSEND AND CREW, LLP			BARNHART, LORA ELIZABETH	
TWO EMBARCADERO CENTER			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
EIGHTH FLOOR			1651	
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111-3834				
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE		
31 DAYS	01/11/2007	PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/789,159	OCHIYA ET AL.
	Examiner Lora E. Barnhart	Art Unit 1651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 August 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 1-15 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendments

Applicant's amendments filed 8/3/06 to the claims have been entered. Claims 16-21 have been cancelled. Claims 1-15 remain pending in the current application.

Applicant should note that the examiner for this case has changed.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-15, in the reply filed on 8/3/06 is acknowledged. Upon further consideration, however, the examiner has determined that an election of species is required.

This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

Growth medium conditions: Numerous, as in claims 1, 4, and 6.

Source of cells: Numerous, as in claims 9 and 14.

Type of cells: Numerous, as in claims 10 and 15.

The species are distinct because none is rendered obvious by the others in its group and because the disclosure does not connect them by any design, operation, or effect. See M.P.E.P. § 806.04(b). A requirement for restriction is permissible if there is a patentable difference between the species as claimed and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction is not required. See M.P.E.P. § 808.01(a). In this case, considering enablement, utility, and description issues for each claimed species, as well as conducting a thorough search of the prior art for each and every combination embodied by the present claims, would pose a serious burden to the examiner.

Additionally, claim 11 indicates that the conditions used to differentiate pluripotent cells to hepatocytes may be any of several conditions (*i.e.*, each embodiment encompassed by claims 1 and 6), indicating that the medium conditions are distinct, since performing any of the sets of steps in claims 1 and 6 yields hepatocytes. Indeed, the claims encompass 33 distinct culture conditions, 5 types of mammals (one of which, "monkeys," encompasses numerous species), and 4 types of cells (at least one of which, "adult stem cells," encompasses a large number of diverse cell types itself), or a total of at least 660 combinations that must be evaluated for compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as well as searched for prior art. In short, performing a full examination of each and every combination encompassed by the instant claims would impose a serious burden on the examiner.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to point out a particular embodiment in which **all** variables are particularly defined, even if this election is with traverse. For example, a compliant reply to this requirement might comprise a choice of "a first medium comprising leukemia inhibitory factor and retinoic acid and a second medium comprising oncostatin M," "mouse," and "embryonic stem cells" (as exemplified beginning at page 19, line 21, of the as-filed specification; this election reads on independent claim 1 and its dependents) or "a first medium comprising leukemia inhibitory factor and retinoic acid, a second medium comprising hepatocyte growth factor, fibroblast growth factor 4, and acidic fibroblast growth factor, and a third medium comprising oncostatin M," "monkey," and "embryonic stem cells" (as exemplified at page

29, lines 13-36; this election reads on independent claims 1, 4, and 6 and their dependents).

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claims 1, 4, 6, 8-11, and 13-15 are generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species.

MPEP § 809.02(a).

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the

record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lora E. Barnhart whose telephone number is 571-272-1928. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 9:00am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Wityshyn can be reached on 571-272-0926. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Lora E Barnhart

leb



SANDRA E. SAUCIER
PRIMARY EXAMINER